



AMNESTY

ELY CITY GROUP

**Remembering those experiencing injustice,
A time for contemplation.....**

July 2026

“Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners. And those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves were suffering.” Hebrews: 13:3

A special time is set aside in Bishop Alcock's Chapel between the two morning services on the first Sunday of each month from 9.00am to 10.15am. Here we can hold in mind or pray for the people whose cases are highlighted for the current month. This meditation is open to those of all faiths and none.

Colombia: women's rights defender attacked

In Colombia, enforced disappearance is one of many forms of violence affecting the country because of decades of armed conflict and socio-political violence. Around 210,000 were victims between 1985 and 2016. The International Committee of the Red Cross has documented a further 1,730 cases between December 2016 and July 2024. Women have played a leading role in the search for victims of enforced disappearances and in creating organisations of relatives. In May 2026 Claribel Morena Castillo was murdered after searching for her daughter for four years. In June Cleiner Almanza was attacked, tortured and nearly killed. She is searching for her brother who was forcibly disappeared in 1998. She is also a renowned human rights defender and has previously been attacked.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the Colombian authorities to investigate the attacks against Cleiner Almanza
- For the Colombian authorities to search for the victims of enforced disappearance

and to protect the rights and safety of women searchers.

Pakistan: Forced disappearance

Dad Shah is the brother of well-known human rights defender Fozia Baloch. On 21 April in front of multiple witnesses he was forcibly disappeared from his home. Since then his family members have been harassed and arbitrarily detained by law enforcement for seeking answers. He was previously abducted in 2023 and pressured during his detention to silence his sister's advocacy. Dad Shah has many allergies and his family are worried about his health.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the Pakistan authorities to immediately disclose Dad Shah's whereabouts, ensure he is protected from ill-treatment and is given adequate healthcare
- For Dad Shah's immediate release and a prompt investigation into his forced disappearance.

USA: enforced disappearance of migrants and asylum seekers

The Everglades Detention Facility in Florida, popularly known as Alligator Alcatraz, was opened in Florida in July 2025. The Governor of Florida finally closed it on Thursday 25 June 2026. It was the first state-owned and operated immigration detention facility in the US. However, there was no federal oversight. A lack of registration or tracking allowed authorities to hold individuals incommunicado. Families were not told of their whereabouts and detainees could not contact a lawyer. Detainees suffered cruel and degrading conditions: overflowing sewage, shackling, denial of medical care, sleep deprivation and punishment practices that amounted to torture. The negative publicity and high costs meant that it had become a political liability for Governor DeSantis.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For all those detainees transferred to detention centres in other parts of the US
- For their families to be informed immediately of their whereabouts
- For all US immigration centres to meet international human rights laws and standards.

Good news

According to the United National Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, Israel has destroyed 90% of Gaza's schools, all of its universities, numerous archives and historical sites, and at least 13 libraries since October 2023. Palestinian writer Omar Hamad and his friend Ibrahim Massri have raised over \$100,000 and secured a location to build the Phoenix Library. The core of the new library is Omar's abandoned book collection, which miraculously survived. New books are being donated from around the world and collected from rubble all over Gaza. The library opened on 21 April 2026.

Sources for cases: Amnesty International

'I pray for all of us, oppressor and friend, that together we may succeed in building a better world, through human understanding and love, and that in doing so we may reduce the pain and suffering of all sentient beings.'

Dalai Lama XIV

"To clasp one's hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world."

Please keep this sheet to hand and use it in prayer or meditation, and any action you feel and find possible.

Your local Amnesty group can be contacted at www.amnestyelycity.org.uk

ELY AMNESTY NEWS

Our monthly planning meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month. Our next two meetings will be held from 7pm on 7 July and 4 August in St Peter's House, Broad Street, Ely, CB7 4AH. Anyone interested in attending to find out more or join our group would be very welcome.